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Message Text

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70
ACTION ARA-20

INFO OCT-01 ADP-00 AID-20 CIAE-00 DODE-00 PM-07 H-03

INR-10 L-03 NSAE-00 NSC-10 PA-03 RSC-01 PRS-01 SS-15

USIA-15 OMB-01 NIC-01 EB-11 RSR-01 /123 W
---------- 067768
R 261352Z JUL 73
FM AMEMBASSH LA PAZ
TO SECSTATE WASHDC 534
INFO USCINCSO
AMEMBASSY BOGOTA
AMEMBASSY CARACAS
AMEMBASSY QUITO
AMEMBASSY LIMA

UNCLAS LA PAZ 4525

E.O. 11652: N/A
TAGS: PINS BL
SUBJ: PRESIDENT BANZER'S JULY 24 PRESS CONFERENCE

BEGIN SUMMARY. IN HIS JULY 24 PRESS CONFERENCE, PRESIDENT BANZER DEFENDED VALUE OF HIS RECENTLY-COMPLETED TRIP TO FOUR ANDEAN COUNTRIES, CITING BENEFITS WHICH BOLIVIA WILL DERIVE FROM THESE VISITS. PRESS COVERAGE HIGHLIGHTED BANZER'S ASSERTION THAT PERU NOW "FORMALLY SUPPORTS" BOLIVIA'S DEMANDS FOR RENEWED ACCESS TO THE SEA. END SUMMARY.

1. PRESIDENT BANZER HELD PRESS CONFERENCE JULY 24 TO DISCUSS HIS RECENT TRIP (JULY 12-20) TO VENEZUELA, COLOMBIA, ECUADOR AND PERU. BANZER DEFENDED THE TRIP AS AN OPPORTUNITY TO PRESENT BOLIVIA'S VIEWS ON THE INTEGRATION PROCESS WITHIN THE ANDEAN REGION, AS WELL AS TO EXPLAIN BOLIVIAN POLITICAL REALITIES TO FOREIGN AUDIENCES. HE ALSO CITED THE CONTENT OF THE VARIOUS JOINT DECLARATIONS ISSUED IN EACH CAPITAL IN JUSTIFYING THE USEFULNESS OF THE VISITS.

2. PRESS COVERAGE OF THE CONFERENCE HIGHLIGHTED THE PRESIDENT'S
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ASSERTION THAT PERU NOW "FORMALLY SUPPORTS" BOLIVIA'S DEMANDS

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FOR RENEWED ACCESS TO THE SEA; BANZER APPEARED TO BASE THIS JUDGMENT ON THE CONTENTS OF THE JOINT DECLARATION ISSUED BY PRESIDENT VELASCO AND HIMSELF, WHICH HE SAID "SHOWS CLEARLY AND CONCRETELY (PERU'S) SOLIDARITY" WITH THE BOLIVIAN POSITION. OTHER POSITIVE RESULTS OF THE TRIP NOTED BY THE PRESIDENT INCLUDED:
--A TECHNICAL COOPERATION AGREEMENT BETWEEN THE VENEZUELAN MINISTRY OF DEFENSE AND THE BOLIVIAN ARMED FORCES;
--DONATION BY THE GOVERNMENT OF VENEZUELA OF A BUILDING IN CARACAS TO HOUSE THE EMBASSY OF BOLIVIA;
--EXPRESSION BY ECUADOR OF INTEREST IN BUYING BOLIVIAN OIL, SINCE CERTAIN ECUADOREAN OIL REFINERIES REQUIRE THE TYPE OF OIL PRODUCED IN BOLIVIA AT PRESENT;
--FURTHER STUDY WILL BE MADE BY PERU AND BOLIVIA OF A PLANNED PROJECT TO BUILD A BINATIONAL PETROCHEMICAL PLANT.

4. COMMENT: IN THIS PRESS CONFERENCE, PRESIDENT BANZER APPEARS TO HAVE DEFENDED HIMSELF WITH RELATIVE SUCCESS AGAINST CHARGES, MADE BOTH WITHIN AND OUTSIDE BOLIVIA, THAT HIS TRIP TO THE ANDEAN NATIONS WAS A TOTALLY FRUITLESS AND UNNECESSARY VENTURE.
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